

DPT-Something Else to Worry About

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At least three times a day a parent asks me if they are going to kill or cripple their child by getting their DPT shot (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus.) The media has paid a lot of attention to bad vaccine reactions recently and people are frightened.

The vaccine causes minor side effects in 40 percent of children. Swelling, redness and tenderness at the site as well as fevers to 104 and tiredness are common and harmless. Of more concern, one in one thousand will have persistent high pitched crying with high fever. Six of ten thousand will have seizures or episodes of limpness and unresponsiveness. One in 300,000 will have permanent brain damage from the vaccine.

Sudden Infant Death Syn-

drome has been blamed on DPT shots. Most SIDS deaths occur between one and six months of age. In this country that is the age DPT shots are being given. However, the risk of SIDS in that age group is just as high in countries that don't begin the DPT until after six months of age. Most experts believe the SIDS deaths occurring after DPT are coincidental.

Pertussis (whooping cough) is a bacterial respiratory infection that affects mostly young children. It starts with a runny nose, cough and fever which lasts for a week. The fever subsides and the cough becomes more severe with fits of coughing and choking. This can cause convulsions and brain injury from lack of oxygen. The disease can last for months and

malnutrition becomes a problem. One out of 8000 children with the disease will have permanent brain damage and three of every 1000 children will die.

In Japan people stopped getting DPT shots because two children died of vaccine complications. Withdrawal of the vaccine from the market was followed by 35,000 cases of pertussis and 118 deaths. If we were to stop vaccinating in this country experts predict that within 4 or 5 years 10,000 children a week would get pertussis. Four times as many children would die of the disease as do of the vaccine.

There are some children who should not have the vaccine. Children with progressive neurological diseases and children who have had serious reactions in the past should not have the DPT

...to get in too big a hurry to shoot. The best advice in a situation like this is to take your time. Sit back and closely observe the scene. What direction is the light coming from? What kind of light is it, bright and well defined shadows, or soft and diffuse creating more even illumination? Determine the primary subject that will receive the most emphasis. How does the light affect it as opposed to other elements in the scene. In other words if a subject grabs your attention to the extent that you commit yourself to making an image, then it is worth the

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...in relation to the overall reading you took first.

Meter other elements in the scene, noting their relationship to one another. Bear in mind that there is an exposure latitude of around seven stops for negative, or print, film and five stops latitude for slide. In other words if the range between the brightest and the darkest parts of a scene exceeds these latitudes, those portions will be either under or overexposed. This is why it is so important to move in with your meter and determine the overall brightness ratio of a scene. After doing so we sometimes have to make compromises in our exposure in order to produce the best rendition of the primary subject. A good rule of thumb in this regard is to meter for the highlights, or brightest parts, or a scene when using slide, or transparency film, and to meter the shadows when using negative film.

Sometimes it is not possible to

card in the same light as is falling on the distant scene and take your meter reading from it. Make sure that the card fills the viewfinder and that you are measuring only the light reflected from it.

Finally, if no gray card is available, take a meter reading from the palm of your hand, once again being careful that it is placed in the same light falling on the subject. The human palm will reflect approximately one stop more light than gray card so note the reading, and then increase your exposure by one stop. In other words if the palm reading shows f11 at 1/125 then shoot at f8 at 1/125 or f11 at 1/60.

Don't be slaves to all the automatic features in your camera. Try these metering techniques. Experiment with them, metering for highlights and shadows, using a gray and the palm of your hand. I think you'll be pleased with the results.